

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. ICELAND: BASES BLOCKED

ICELANDIC LABOR UNIONS CONTINUED TO PICKET US FACILITIES FEBRUARY 26 AND SET UP BARRICADES BLOCKING ACCESS TO A TRANSMITTER SITE AND A RADAR INSTALLATION. THE UNIONS CLAIMED THE BARRICADES WERE A PROTEST AGAINST INCIDENTS AT SEA INVOLVING THE BRITISH AND WOULD REMAIN UNTIL BRITISH FRIGATES ARE REMOVED FROM ICELANDIC-CLAIMED WATERS. PRIME MINISTER HALLGRIMSSON TOLD CHARGE MARTIN FEBRUARY 25:

--HE BELIEVES THE LABOR ACTION IS A "ONE SHOT AFFAIR" AND WILL SOON END.

--HE THINKS THAT THE BARRICADES NEED NOT INJURE BASE OPERATIONS IF HANDLED CORRECTLY AND HOPES THE USG WILL
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REACT WITH "PATIENCE AND CALMNESS."

CHARGE'S COMMENT: IT WAS CLEAR FROM OUR CONVERSATION THAT THE GOI WILL DO NOTHING TO REMOVE THE PICKETS OR THE BARRICADES. HALLGRIMSSON OBVIOUSLY HOPES THAT RESOLUTION OF AN

OVERALL LABOR DISPUTE, EXPECTED IN TWO OR THREE DAYS, WILL SOLVE THE PROBLEM. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES WE SEE LITTLE TO GAIN IN PRESSURING THE GOI. (CONFIDENTIAL) REYKJAVIK 274, 2/26.)

2. ARGENTINA: CONGRESSIONAL INACTION INVITES A COUP

THE MOVE BY OPPOSITION PARTIES FEBRUARY 25 TO TAKE UP THE IMPEACHMENT MOTION IN CONGRESS FAILED WHEN DISSIDENT PERONISTS VOTED AGAINST IT. THEY CLAIMED THE MOTION BESMIRCHED PERONISM AS A WHOLE RATHER THAN JUST MRS. PERON.

A MEMBER OF THE CGT LABOR ORGANIZATION'S EXECUTIVE BOARD, WHOSE VIEWS EMBASSY BUENOS AIRES HAS FOUND ACCURATELY REFLECT THE THINKING OF LABOR LEADERS, SAID FEBRUARY 26:

--A MILITARY COUP WILL OCCUR "WITHOUT QUESTION" BETWEEN MARCH 3 AND MARCH 15.

--AMBASSADOR HILL'S REPRESENTATIONS TO THE NEW MILITARY GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THE INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT WILL BE CRUCIAL TO THE FUTURE OF ARGENTINA.

EMBASSY COMMENT: THE FAILURE TO CONSIDER THE IMPEACHMENT MOTION NOW MAKES IT APPEAR MOST UNLIKELY THAT CONGRESS WILL BE ABLE TO ACT EVEN THOUGH THE RADICAL PARTY IS STILL CALLING FOR A JOINT SESSION ON FEBRUARY 27 TO CENSURE MRS. PERON. THE WHEELS LEADING TO A MILITARY SOLUTION HAVE PROBABLE ALREADY BEGUN TO TURN--WHETHER THE GOLPE COMES NEXT WEEK, THE WEEK AFTER THAT OR EVEN A BIT LATER. (CONFIDENTIAL) BUENOS AIRES 1325 AND 1330, 2/26.) KISSINGER

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